3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

Gullahs were "easily excited," and claimed that it was necessary "to instruct them in distinguishing between animal feeling and a real work of grace." Methodists frowned upon Gullah paroxysms, not viewing these as manifestations of Christian fervor but as non-Christian or "natural" means of expressive outlet, born of older traditions. In any case, black impetuosity had to be eradicated just as the violins and banjos had to be silenced. Generally speaking, Methodism among the Gullahs can be partly described as E. P. Thompson implicitly viewed it among British workers—a religion of the heart that sometimes attempted to stifle spontaneity of the mind and soul.[69] Slaves were rarely allowed to be themselves in the presence of Methodist emissaries. This fact, coupled with Gullah preference for a presentation of religion (or a religious presentation) in more original and familiar terms, lost the Methodist church many black converts.

Acceptance of Christianity by the Gullahs, as presented by their Methodist instructors, was more of a process of coming to terms than a total commitment. Christianity was incorporated into, but did not immediately supersede, all of their previously held beliefs and practices. The missionaries realized this, reported it with disappointment, and hoped for a better day. Such was the case with the adult generation of Gullahs in the 1830s, and this continued to be a major factor in the 1840s as well.[70] On the isolated Sea Islands a certain Old World cultural similitude contributed to the retention of communal and cultural components. Traditions inspired by Africanity and infused with Gullah folk Christianity remained identifiable well past the antebellum years. Nevertheless, Africanisms outlasting the capture, the long march, and the culminating humiliation of foreign servitude had to be preserved in a vestigial state. In addition, commingling of various ethnic groups indicates that cultural diffusion was also an important factor as native ceremonies and customs were renewed and exchanged. Therefore, what was retained of African religion and spirituality was culled from the customs, beliefs, and practices of a number of West African peoples. Thus Gullah-English dialect may be a pidgin influenced mainly by Tshi (Gold Coast), KiKongo (Kongo-Angola), and Mande (Upper Guinea) linguistic patterns. But Gullah spiritual and communitarian features bear strong resemblance to traditions of Upper Guinea and BaKongo peoples. When the Methodists arrived among the Gullahs, they probably found a syncretism of African customs and practices sprinkled with snatches of Protestantism borrowed

7: Jackson L-5 (1973-1976) 1989
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NOTES

121 197 198 1. A PIDGIN is a marginal language which arises to fulfill certain restricted communicational needs among people who have no common language. It is sharply reduced in structure and vocabulary as contrasted with the languages from which it is derived (Todd 1974a:1 and Hall 1966). Theoretically, the lingo which developed as a result of the heterogeneous grouping of West African languages and English was a pidgin language: a language which was the mother tongue of neither African nor European, reduced in structure and vocabulary and adequate only for minimal discourse between speakers. When this language became the mother tongue of children born into this language environment, its lexicon and grammatical machinery expanded until it was ample linguistically for effective cultural transmission, productivity and communication. Consequently, the pidgin became a CREOLE. In the case of Gullah, elements derived from different African languages caused different creole varieties and as a result, Gullah still varies linguistically from island to island.

121 193 2. No consensus has been reached on what features the terms BASILECT, MESOLECT, and ACROLECT describe. On a gradum ranging from 1 to 10 (with basilect being represented by 1 and acrolect represented by 10), Stewart 1965

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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000 excitement that may lead to such exaltation as few white people ever see. It is an unforgettable experience, rare in these days of practical religion when all miracles are scientifically explained.

633 I notice that men are particularly partial to the work songs, of which the shanties [16] of the black stevedores are the most amusing. When a plantation is near a navigable river or salt water, songs like "Stevedore's in trouble, Carry 'im to the Aly-mo," and "Sandyanna" may possibly be heard. Both carry in their titles the date of their inception, and obviously hark back to the period of the Mexican War. Others bring in Australia and Rio along with "Go 'round the Horn, Yalla Gal—Go 'round the Horn" and suggest the period of the windjammer.

At The Mills on the west side of St. Simon's—in the eighteen-eighties—the Inland Waterway was filled with sailing vessels from all parts of the world.[17] These were loaded with lumber that had been floated down the Altamaha; but, as Cap'n Joe, the crew leader, says, so little lumber moves these days that the songs that helped the stevedores to handle the great "sticks" are well-nigh forgotten. A pity to let one of them be lost.

[184] Then there are the "rags," the "fiddle" or "sinful" songs. These may be plentiful in the interior; but on the coast, where the Negroes are apparently more religious, they have been the most difficult to locate.

533 Where there are wide fields, musical half-yodeled calls often bring "'spon[illegible]" from laborers a mile away. When a field needs to be burned over, a sail is flapping
•198 idly, or rice is to be fanned, you may hear a Negro "calling the wind": "Co' win'! Co' win'! Co'! Co'!" A prolonged whistle follows:

—in the African manner of calling the rain.[18]

533 If a plantation is sufficiently remote, and the owner is ultra-modern in his taste,
534 such a jazz band may be organized as has not been heard in many a year. It is only necessary to call for the services of those who can still "rap the bones" (real bones, of a thickness and length suitable for manipulation between the middle fingers,

[16] Or chanteys—as some prefer to call them.
[17] Julia Armstrong tells me they were lined up "like sardines in a box."
[18] A gramophone record of a Togoland rain invocation is astonishingly similar.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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CHAPTER SIX

Work Songs

In the old days, before Negroes rode to work in automobiles, they sang as they walked, and most of their tasks were lightened with song. One of my pleasantest memories is of hearing them singing in the early morning and at sundown, and—during the heat of the day—calling to each other across wide fields. The call was peculiar, and I always wondered how they came by such a strange form of vocal gymnastics, since I never heard a white person do anything like it. Years later I ran across a description of the trick in Natalie Curtis-Burlin's *Songs and Tales from the Dark Continent*. The author, in speaking of a Bantu rain song, calls attention to a passage which contains "an upward break in the voice, something like a Swiss yodel." Such field-calls are rarely heard today, although I am told they are still in use in the vicinity of the Okefenokee Swamp.

In the late eighteen-eighties, the Negroes in my home neighborhood—southern New Jersey—began to pattern their behavior after that of the silent white folk, and from that time on, little of their singing was heard. Farther south, this racial characteristic was later in disappearing. In 1901, Georgia Bryan Conrad tells us that, in her youth, "the Negroes were always singing," but adds regretfully: "Nothing is in greater contrast to that time than the quietness of the Negroes now." [1] However, there are remote places where they still sing at work. In factories where large numbers are employed in such monotonous jobs as shucking oysters or picking crabs and shrimp, rhythmic songs are used to relieve dullness. They are also sung wherever work is heavy, and concerted effort is required. In Brunswick, vessels are still loaded to the musical chant of "Sandy Anna"; freight cars at the sugar terminal are shunted for short distances to the rhythm of "Old Tar River," and the cabin in front of my house was moved on rollers from Kelvin Grove to the significant tune of "Pay Me My Money Down!"

[1] "Reminiscences of a Southern Woman," Southern Workman, 1901.